

WILD GOOSE TALES

3RD QUARTER, 2013



President's Column



Doug Spencer

How fast the summer season came and went. I hope all of you had the opportunity to visit a national wildlife refuge this summer during your travels, especially here in the Willamette Valley. What I enjoy is having the opportunity to walk through habitats that are normally closed to the public during the winter months, due to the wintering geese needing areas to rest and feed in without human disturbance. Now that the fall has returned with the first rains and cooler temperatures, I find this time of year the most exciting for viewing wildlife. Many of the critters that have kept themselves hidden from view are out gathering food or are moving through our area for warmer places to the south. This is a great time to gather your family and friends and take a drive through the refuges or take a walk on the many trails that are available to you. As always, I highly recommend you stop by and purchase unique items from the

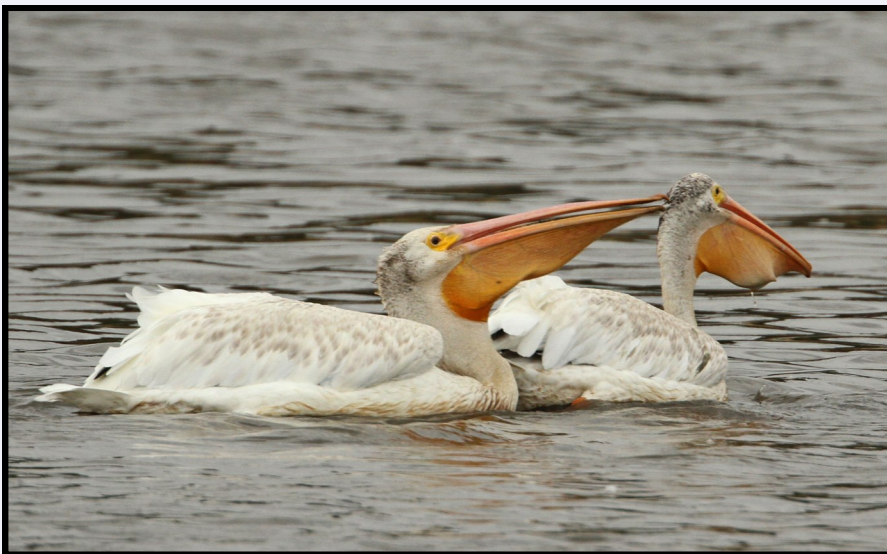


“Wild Goose Nature Store”. You can find items for most occasions, especially for the holidays. All proceeds go toward special projects needed for our refuges.

Now more than ever we need your help. The Willamette Valley NWR Complex will be celebrating its 50th anniversary

next year. Many of you have heard that four refuge staff positions, some permanent positions, have not been re-filled due to lack

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Top Right: Green Heron; Above: 2 American White Pelicans fishing, both captured by Jim Leonard at Baskett Slough NWR

FRIENDS' MISSION

The Friends of the Willamette Valley Refuge Complex is an independent nonprofit organization whose mission is to:

- *Promote the conservation of the natural resources of the Refuge Complex*
- *Foster awareness and appreciation of the Complex through educational and recreational opportunities*
- *Participate in activities that help the Complex achieve its goals.*



Project Leader's Column: A Tribute to the Staff!

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KATRINA MAGGIULLI



Damien Miller

Today, October 2nd, as I write this, twenty-one of my twenty-two staff are on furlough without pay due to a lapse in appropriations. The Refuges have been closed and will remain closed and staff will remain on furlough until Congress has appropriated funds for our salaries and operations, which we hope will be very soon. I write this note to acknowledge the amazing work

of my staff and to recognize them for their dedicated civilian service to our natural resources, wildlife refuges, and habitat!

Yesterday, I patrolled the Refuge after closing the gates. What I noticed was an amazing diversity of wildlife and a Refuge that is in excellent condition for the many resident wildlife species and the migratory waterfowl that will soon be arriving. I noticed a bobcat catching mice in field 22, an elk herd in field 5, and a wide variety of birds including quail, spotted towhees, red tailed hawk, and blue heron, several of which were taking advantage of the newly burned fields that my amazing staff were able to treat prior to the

rains and the furlough!

I hope you get a chance to come out to one of our Refuges soon to enjoy these national treasures. As you tour the Refuges, hike the trails, and enjoy viewing the beauty of God's creation, please join me in honoring the Fish and Wildlife employees, Volunteers, Friends members and Cooperative Farmers that have poured their life energy into managing and maintaining these beautiful wildlife oasis in the Willamette Valley. The results of their hard work is evident by the presence of the many wildlife species that chose to call these great places home and we owe them a debt of gratitude for their hard work, professionalism, and dedication to our mission!

President's Column

(Continued from page 1)

of funding. The Park Ranger position, previously held by Sallie Gentry has not been filled since she transferred to Atlanta, Georgia. With this and the other positions not being filled, our Friends organization has been helping out as much as possible by volunteering for special events, providing guided walks for school children and organizations, giving talks, and providing funds. Recently a request for additional help was sent to our organization from the refuges. This is where you all can help. We need volunteers for planning next year's 50th anniversary, staffing the store, additional Board Members, and projects that the ref-

uge staff have identified. They are brush removal, leaf blowing off of the boardwalks, painting the Fiechter House fence, replacing bench seats, replacing the Woodpecker Loop Trail Overlook, etc.. When each of you signed up to be a member of our organization, many of you checked the boxes on the application to help out. Now more than ever, we need your help. Please contact Katrina Maggiulli at 541-757-7236 EXT. 209 or myself at 541-917-8928, if you want to help. Thank you all for your support of our national wildlife refuges.

Board Update

- ◆ At the annual meeting held on October 7th at the Corvallis Public Library, all three nominated Board Directors were unanimously confirmed by attendees. These Directors are Carla Berrey, Melanie Garrett and Brian Wachelka.
- ◆ The Board is still looking to fill the positions of Treasurer and Secretary. For full position descriptions please contact the Friends intern at Katrina_Maggiulli@fws.gov.
- ◆ With the funds from the NFWF grant in the board's hands, the development of new display materials and a redesign of the Friends website are underway. If you would like to assist with the website development, please contact Katrina.





The Hiker's Trail

Brian Wachelka

The Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex is well known as a sanctuary for attracting a diversity of waterfowl and other migratory birds. A little less known is the number and variety of biking trails available throughout the Complex. From boardwalks to buttes and wetlands to woodpeckers, there is a trail for everyone. This new column will spotlight a particular trail each newsletter to inspire our friends to set aside their binoculars for a moment and get hiking! Each trail will be rated for difficulty level (easy/moderate/difficult) based on ease of access, steepness, elevation change, and other trail conditions. First up ...

The Homer Campbell Memorial Trail (W.L. Finley NWR)

Distance: 0.4 mile one way

Accessibility: Open Year round

Difficulty: Easy

A perfect place to begin The Hiker's Trail is with a stroll along the boardwalk! That's right, this "trail" is actually a boardwalk that begins at the parking area east of the historic Fiechter House. It then winds its way through the Muddy Creek riparian area and ends at an observation blind overlooking Cabell Marsh. There is also a seasonal extension (open April 1 to October 31) to the boardwalk which connects to the longer walking trail around Cabell Marsh and the rest of the Refuge interior.

WALKING IS MAN'S BEST
MEDICINE.

~HIPPOCRATES

The boardwalk trail (completed in 2007) and observation blind (finished in 2008) were created in memory of Homer J. Campbell who was a biologist, an environmentalist, and a life-long valley resident. It was also the first wheelchair-accessible trail on the Refuge. His memory is very well served as this boardwalk is a true gem and one of only five trails at Finley open year-round.

The boardwalk takes its time and



meanders through the wetland of Muddy Creek. It is populated with Oregon ash and beautiful big-leaf maple among other species. Great trailing beards of lichen hang from the trees, blowing and swaying in the breeze in Tolkienesque fashion. The trail is well-shaded in the summer, perfect for even the hottest of days. The winter months bring seasonal flooding. Not to fear though, the boardwalk is plenty high enough to keep your hiking boots dry.

Homer Campbell Memorial Trail is highly recommended for families and those with young children. There are two benches along the way for taking



photos (or snack breaks) and sturdy hand-rails to keep those little ones safe. The observation blind at the end provides cover to watch for wildlife or simply to get out of the rain for a few minutes. So, if you are looking for an easy but enjoyable hike, then come visit Homer Campbell Memorial Trail!



Photos Clockwise from top: The Boardwalk; Observation Blind overlooking Cabell Marsh; Swaying beards of lichen. Photos by Brian Wachelka.



Refuge Program Highlights: Songbird Banding on the Refuges

Molly Monroe/USFWS

Another season of songbird banding was successfully wrapped up in mid-September resulting in over 250 birds receiving a new piece of jewelry. Run by USGS biologist, Joan Hagar, two different sites were used to capture, study and release over 30 species of songbirds ranging in size from a rufous hummingbird to a Northern flicker.



In spring and fall, migration banding took place along a slough at Snag Boat Bend where nets were placed to target migratory songbirds such as Wilson's warblers and Swainson's thrushes. Over 120 birds were captured in the three days we banded here this fall.

Throughout the summer, Pigeon Butte is part of an ongoing study where the same area of capture is used year to year, also known as a MAPS station (Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship). Birds at multiple MAPS stations across the country are studied during the breeding season to provide critical information relating to the ecology, conservation, and management of North American land-bird populations, and the factors responsible for changes in their populations.

(<http://www.birdpop.org/maps.htm>)



Banding at Pigeon Butte also provides information on how birds respond to restoration efforts in oak stands. With years of pre-restoration data to compare to, we are now seeing oak-dependent species, such as white-breasted nuthatch and acorn woodpecker, utilize the area where fir and maple were removed. Another benefit of banding at the same location is recapturing

banded birds. The oldest recapture to date was a Swainson's Thrush, caught a few seasons ago, that was banded 7 years prior. Adequate food supplies and breeding conditions brought this bird back to nest at Pigeon Butte in between annual trips to South America, highlighting the importance of protecting and maintaining this critical habitat.

Left: A male Western Tanager poses for a photo at Pigeon Butte on W.L. Finley NWR. Right: FWS biologist Molly Monroe holding a Northern Flicker at Snag Boat Bend. USFWS

Refuge Program Highlights: Prescribed Burns

With the arrival of the autumn rains comes the end of another successful prescribed burn season. In just a few short months, the refuge fire crew conducted over twenty burns in units across the Willamette Valley, including W.L. Finley NWR, Baskett Slough NWR, Ankeny NWR, Nestucca Bay NWR, and various private lands sites. Over 1,000 acres were completed with support from agencies such as the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Oregon Department of Forestry, Bureau of Land Management, Oregon Military Depart-

ment, and the U.S. Forest Service. Refuge employees were also quick to reciprocate the favor and assisted in multiple burns hosted by the Eugene Bureau of Land Management and Philomath Oregon Department of Forestry.

All burns were intended for natural resource benefit, whether it be for promoting habitat for migrating geese, minimizing spread of invasive species, establishing a new starting point for planting native forbs and grasses, or reducing competition from non-native and woody species.

Numerous research burns were also completed for the Institute for Applied Ecology and a master's thesis project from Oregon State University to analyze fire's impact on endangered native forbs such as golden Indian paintbrush and Willamette daisy and non-native invasives like



Himalayan blackberry. Conclusions from these studies and continuous monitoring of all burns are expected to improve future management of our refuges and valley lands.

Philomath ODF assists refuge employees in burn near Cheadle Barn. Photo & article by Jona Ensley.



Refuge Focus: Over 50 years ago...*The Farmsteads of William L. Finley NWR*

Laila Leinesch/USFWS

Next year marks the 50th anniversary of W.L. Finley refuge; Ankeny and Baskett Slough NWRs came into existence in 1965. The Refuge together with the Friends is planning a big celebration to mark this historic occasion. I thought it might be interesting to take a look back into the last 50 years+ and share with folks the evolution of the Complex.

Much of the history of the Refuges can be found in the yearly narratives prepared by the staff; some of which have survived over the years. Additionally, Lynda Sekora's 1989 master thesis on the 19th century Euro-American settlement of the Finley Refuge is a wonderful resource describing the flora, fauna, and settlement history of the ten farmsteads that became Finley NWR. I'll just focus on a few in this article.

The first Euro-American settlers to the Finley Refuge area arrived in fall and winter of 1845-1846. Between 1846 and 1861, five land claims located within the present day boundary of the Refuge were established. The locations of the farmsteads were determined by year-round water supply, good drainage, prevailing winds, and a central to a variety of land uses. According to family histories and public records, the first farms on Finley

were devoted to general farming with cattle, sheep, and hogs, and to grain production, mainly oats and wheat.

John Foster was the first to stake a claim, 640 acres, within the present day boundary of Finley Refuge in 1846. Foster was primarily a cattle rancher, but he also grew cereal crops. John Foster was a very successful rancher and made many improvements on his farm before retiring from ranching in 1884 and turning management over to his son, John Wesley (J.W.). J.W. operated the ranch until 1909 when he sold the land within Finley's boundary to Henry C. Cabell.

In March 1850, John Fiechter settled a 640-acre tract just south of the Foster homestead. Fiechter was born in Baden, Germany and immigrated to the United States with his family when he was twelve years old. As an adult, Fiechter was an adventurer, acting as a fur trader and guide. He made his way into Oregon with the wagon train that forged the Applegate Trail. Fiechter was a successful rancher and his holdings grew in size and included horses, sheep



Above: The Big Barn Farmstead (location of present-day headquarters building). Below: Cabell Lodge and the Fiechter Homestead. Photos taken January 18, 1961, photographer unknown.

and hogs. He cultivated hay, wheat, and oats. But in 1861 his life was cut short by a hunting accident. His widow, Cynthia, was left with six young children and an 1,100 acre farm and so not surprisingly she re-married within 6 months. She married Archibald Johnson, a hired hand on the ranch, and together they operated and grew the ranch until 1906.

The Joel B. Perkins 320-acre claim was settled in 1854. Two-thirds of the holding occupied the western highlands of Pigeon Butte and Maple Knoll. Although Perkins was a

farmer, there is no historical record of what his farm produced. He sold out in 1862 and eventually the farmstead was purchased by Richard S. Irwin in 1884. Irwin was born in County Caven, Ireland and was a merchant-farmer who had been a storekeeper in New York, Ohio, Illi-

nois, Iowa, Portland, and Corvallis before he purchased land on present day Finley Refuge. He was an enterprising agriculturalist and raised hogs, sheep, cattle, horses, turkeys, geese, and chickens, and planted two orchards. He traded in stock-on-the-hoof, as well as in by-products such as wool, lard, bacon, etc. He grew his own oats and hay and in 1902 he introduced ryegrass into his operation. Irwin was an active politician and served as Benton County Commissioner for four years. He held a seat on the Board of Directors of the Corvallis State Bank. Irwin died in 1920 of diabetes. The Irwin farmstead was eventually acquired by James Lemon in 1947, who then gifted it to his in-laws, Richard and Barbara Cheadle. The Cheadles remained on the on the farm until 1965. The farmstead became known as the "Cheadle Place" locally.

The northern half of the present



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Urban Wildlife Refuge Initiative to Reach Millions with Conservation Connections

Recognizing that 80 percent of Americans live in big and small cities, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has forged a multi-faceted Urban Wildlife Refuge Initiative to make its programs reflect the diverse perspectives, values and cultures of America today. Ultimately, the Initiative will make the Service's programs far more relevant to millions of Americans, giving them myriad ways to participate in wildlife conservation and recreation.

Hundreds of communities will benefit economically as a new generation of city dwellers learns such wildlife-dependent recreation as birding, fishing, hunting, hiking, kayaking and canoeing, and more.

The Urban Wildlife Refuge Initiative grows out of the Service's Conserving the Future process, which set a strategic path for the National Wildlife Refuge System for the next decade or so. The Initiative is built on four major elements:

Standards of Excellence to measure how well national wildlife refuges reach urban Americans in new and more effective ways. The Standards

are aimed at national wildlife refuges within 25 miles of urban areas with 250,000 people or more. But they are equally instructive for wildlife refuges serving more rural communities. The public can comment on the Standards through September 20: <http://americaswildlife.org/wp-content/uploads/group-documents/69/1377531466-DraftUrbanStandardsofExcellence.pdf>

Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnerships to work in geographically-dispersed communities not fully reached by Service programs;

Director's Order that authorizes and encourages all Service programs to conduct cooperative fish and wildlife conservation, education and outreach in urban communities; and

Urban Academy to train Service employees, members of non-profit Friends organizations, and partners to better serve urban residents. The Urban Academy will be held September 23-25 at the National Conservation Training Center in West Virginia.

The first-time Urban Academy will train participants not only how to understand cultural diversity, but also how to overcome barriers, create partner-

ships, and understand and engage new audiences.

The first eight Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnerships, designed to help set the stage for expanding the nation's conservation constituency, were established this year; three more will be established by 2015. The Director's Order formally establishes the Urban Wildlife Refuge Designation and Partnership program, creating a new category of partnership-based lands that are neither owned by the Service nor governed by the

Department of the Interior. Instead, they are in urban areas where people can enjoy outdoor experiences that foster connections with fish and wildlife resources and promote active engagement of people in the natural world.



The Summer of the Bittern

"This was the summer of the American Bittern at Ankeny NWR. On Salem Audubon Society field trips that Barbara Dolan and I lead at Ankeny NWR, we have seen as many as 10 American Bitterns. We've been seeing increasing numbers of Bitterns at Ankeny over the past few summers. Ankeny is becoming one of the best places to see Bitterns in the Willamette Valley, along with Black Phoebe and Pied-billed Grebes."

—Tim Johnson
Salem, OR



Above: One of many American bitterns spotted at Eagle Marsh on Ankeny NWR this summer. Photo by Tim Johnson.

Interested in Website Management? Help Design the New Friends Website!

The Friends Board is looking for an enthusiastic individual or two to work with their intern, Katrina, and a web design company on the new Friends website. For more information contact Katrina at Katrina_Maggiulli@fws.gov



Refuge Focus: Over 50 Years Ago...

(Continued from page 5)

-day Finley Refuge was purchased between 1906 and 1917 by the prominent Failing-Cabell family of Portland who acquired the acreage for hunting and investment purposes. The northern half of the claim was purchased by three daughters of Henry Failing. One of the daughters, married to Henry C. Cabell, soon bought out her two sisters and began to add more acreage to the estate. Henry C. Cabell purchased the large southern portion of the estate in 1910. He transferred ownership to his only son, Henry Failing Cabell in 1925. The day-to-day operations of the Failing-Cabell Estate were overseen by a resi-

dent foreman-manager, the first being Robert S. Hughes. Jess Campbell was hired as foreman in 1919. He had been employed on the estate since 1916 and ran the Cabell ranch until his retirement in 1946. He and his wife, Vina, raised nine children on the ranch and when Jess retired his youngest son, Bobby Dean, took over the foreman's position and held it until the Failing Estate was sold in 1964 to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The estate was a working ranch as well as a hunting reserve for the Failing-Cabell family. With the encouragement of Henry F. Cabell, the estate presented unique opportunities for students at Oregon State University

to experiment with various crops and conduct wildlife research on the property during the 1920s and 30s. Cabell often referred to the estate as a "game preserve" where he raised and released pheasants. At the same time Cabell dammed Gray Creek in two locations to create artificial ponds (Beaver and Cattail) for duck use. The Cabells together with their guests journeyed every year from Portland to stay on the ranch to hunt deer and waterfowl. Although Cabell was an avid hunter he was also a naturalist with an interest in all manner of wildlife.

The mineral spring area on lower Pigeon Butte was a plot that changed hands a number of

times throughout the years. It was known as Pigeon Springs for the mineral rich pools that attracted large flocks of band-tailed pigeons—making the plot a valuable hunting location. In 1955, then owner Paul Lee sold the area to G.D. Dennis who established a rock quarry. The quarry operated until 1964. Unfortunately, the blasting from the quarry had destroyed the pools before the area could be purchased and conserved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

In 1964, the refuge was established with a majority of the tracts being purchased at that time. In the next issue....reminiscing with the first Refuge Manager.

Calendar of Events

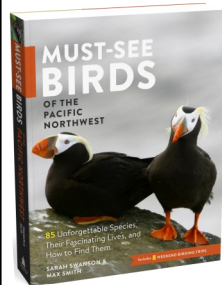
Thursday, November 21—Salem Audubon Society Field Trip to Ankeny NWR, check out their website for more information at <http://www.salemaudubon.org/>

Tuesday, December 17—Salem Audubon Society Field Trip to Ankeny NWR, check out their website for more information at <http://www.salemaudubon.org/>

Sunday, January 19—Naturalist Adventure at Finley NWR with the Neighborhood Naturalist Program. Group will meet at the Avery Park Rose Garden at 9 a.m. to carpool to the Refuge. For more information visit their website at http://www.neighborhood-naturalist.com/neighborhood-naturalist_events.htm#finley

STOP IN AND VISIT THE WILD GOOSE NATURE STORE!

SUPPORT THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY REFUGE COMPLEX BY DOING YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING AT THE WILD GOOSE NATURE STORE.



REMIND FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF YOUR LOVE OF NATURE AND WILDLIFE BY GIVING A NATURE-THEMED GIFT THEY ARE SURE TO ENJOY!!



**LOTS OF NEW BOOKS
AND GIFT ITEMS NOW
IN STOCK!**

What do YOU want to see the Friends do?

Don't want a position on the Board but want to make your voice heard?

Now is your chance!

The Board is looking for feedback from Friends members. If you have ideas for new projects and opportunities or just have an opinion on where you'd like the Friends to focus its energies, let us know! Please contact Friends President Doug Spencer at doug_spencer@q.com or Friends Intern Katrina Maggiulli at katrina_maggiulli@fws.gov.



Membership Form

☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State: _____ Zip: _____

Daytime Phone: _____

Email: _____

☐ Please check this box if you DO NOT wish to share your information directly with the Refuge Volunteer Coordinator for additional volunteer opportunities.

I am interested in these volunteer opportunities:

- ☐ Work Parties ☐ Special Events ☐ Wild Goose Nature Store
☐ Education Programs ☐ Board Member
☐ Habitat Restoration ☐ Grounds Maintenance
☐ Other _____

Annual Membership Categories

- ☐ \$10 Senior / Student
☐ \$15 Individual
☐ \$25 Family

All contributions in excess of membership fees are tax deductible under corporation guidelines.

\$_____ Tax deductible donation

Please make checks payable to FWVNWRC.



Friends of the Willamette Valley
National Wildlife Refuge Complex

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